

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for selling information to a buyer, the method comprising:
 - 5 receiving an offer for the information including at least one contingency from the buyer;
 - providing the information in response to the offer; and
 - receiving a first payment for the information if at least one condition for the contingency is satisfied after the information has been provided
 - 10 to the buyer.
2. The method as set forth in claim 1 further comprising receiving a base payment when the information has been provided to the buyer.
- 15 3. The method as set forth in claim 1 further comprising adjusting an amount for the first payment based on a probability that the condition for the contingency will occur.
4. The method as set forth in claim 3 further comprising:
 - 20 selecting an announced probability for the condition for the contingency; and
 - determining the amount for the first payment based on a function which uses the announced probability for the condition for the contingency occurring.
- 25 5. The method as set forth in claim 4 wherein the amount of the first payment is maximized when the announced probability for the condition occurring is substantially the same as a true probability for the condition occurring.
- 30 6. The method as set forth in claim 1 further comprising setting the condition for the contingency in the received offer.

7. The method as set forth in claim 6 further comprising:
sending a counteroffer to the buyer based on the offer, the
counteroffer providing the condition set for the contingency to the buyer; and
5 determining if the counteroffer with the condition set for the
contingency is accepted by the buyer, wherein the information is only provided if
the condition set for the contingency is accepted.
8. The method as set forth in claim 1 further comprising determining
10 if an event has occurred on which the condition for the contingency is based.
9. The method as set forth in claim 8 further comprising determining
if the condition for the contingency has been satisfied by the event.
10. The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein one or more of the steps
are carried out electronically.
11. A system for selling information to a buyer, the system comprising:
a receiving system that receives an offer for the information
20 including at least one contingency from the buyer;
a source for the information that provides the information in
response to the offer; and
a contingent payment processing system that receives a first
payment for the information if at least one condition for the contingency is
25 satisfied after the information has been provided to the buyer.
12. The system as set forth in claim 11 further comprising a base
payment processing system that receives a base payment when the information
has been provided.
13. The system as set forth in claim 11 wherein the first payment
processing system adjusts an amount for the first payment based on a probability
that the condition for the contingency occurs.

14. The system as set forth in claim 13 wherein the first payment processing system selects an announced probability for the condition for the contingency and a function for determining the amount for the first payment based on the announced probability for the condition for the contingency occurring.

15. The system as set forth in claim 14 wherein the first payment processing system maximizes the amount of the contingent payment when the announced probability for the condition occurring is substantially the same as a true probability for the condition occurring.

16. The system as set forth in claim 11 further comprising a condition setting system which sets the condition for the contingency in the received offer.

17. The system as set forth in claim 16 further comprising:
a counteroffer system that sends a counteroffer to the buyer based on the offer, the counteroffer provides the condition set for the contingency to the buyer; and

purchase decision system that determines if the counteroffer with the condition set for the contingency is accepted by the buyer, wherein the information is only provided if the condition set for the contingency is accepted.

18. The system as set forth in claim 11 further comprising an event determining system that determines if an event has occurred on which the condition for the contingency is based.

19. The system as set forth in claim 18 further comprising a condition determining system that determines if the condition for the contingency has been satisfied by the event.

20. The system as set forth in claim 11 wherein the receiving system receives the offer and the source of the information provides the information electronically.

21. A computer readable medium having stored instructions for selling contingent information which when executed by a processor, causes the processor to perform:

- 5 receiving an offer for the information including at least one contingency from the buyer;
- providing the information in response to the offer; and
- receiving a first payment for the information if at least one condition for the contingency is satisfied after the information has been provided
- 10 to the buyer.

22. The medium as set forth in claim 22 further comprising receiving a base payment when the information has been provided to the buyer.

- 15 23. The medium as set forth in claim 22 further comprising adjusting an amount for the first payment based on an announced probability that the condition for the contingency will occur.

24. The medium as set forth in claim 23 further comprising:
- 20 selecting the announced probability for the condition for the contingency; and
- determining the amount for the first payment based on a function which uses the announced probability for the condition for the contingency occurring.

- 25 25. The medium as set forth in claim 24 wherein the amount of the first payment is maximized when the announced probability for the condition occurring is substantially the same as a true probability for the condition occurring.

- 30 26. The medium as set forth in claim 21 further comprising setting the condition for the contingency in the received offer.

27. The medium as set forth in claim 26 further comprising:
sending a counteroffer to the buyer based on the offer, the
counteroffer providing the condition set for the contingency to the buyer; and
determining if the counteroffer with the condition set for the
5 contingency is accepted by the buyer, wherein the information is only provided if
the condition set for the contingency is accepted.

28. The medium as set forth in claim 21 further comprising
determining if an event has occurred on which the condition for the contingency is
10 based.

29. The medium as set forth in claim 28 further comprising
determining if the condition for the contingency has been satisfied by the event.

30. The medium as set forth in claim 21 wherein one or more of the
15 steps are carried out electronically.